

A

# REVIEW

## OF THE

### Affairs of *FRANCE*:

With Observations on TRANSACTIONS at Home.

**Tuesday, June 12. 1705.**

If I may give a Character of my own Performance, I take my proving that all Parties are or have reason to be Ease, to be the Center and Essential part of the long long Discourse I have been upon, in pressing this Nation to Peace.

Pardon me, Gentlemen, if I think the Reasons I have given, why the Dissenters ought not to be charg'd with Rebellion, either in Fact or in Principle, are Unanswerable — And especially the Reasons why the Church of England, ought not to reproach them with it, are such as I appeal to all the World for the Justice of.

1. Because the Church of England has in all Ages pursued the same Steps, *ofine have Rebeld'd* against their Princes, and upon weaker Occasions.

2. Because both the Church and Government has made such an Acknowledgment of the Justice of their Demands, as to redress almost all the Grievances which they Complain'd of.

3. Because these Concessions being made, the Dissenters have little or nothing to ask of the Government, but the Continuance of what they now actually Enjoy.

It remains then to Enquire, Gentlemen, who are the People that create all the present Differences in this Nation? What their Pretensions are, and what must be done in order to Peace.

I have Declar'd the Dissenters are Ease, (their fears of being brought back again to, former Sufferings Excepted) I have prov'd they are so Ease, by proving that they ought to be so, and must be Distracted, and forlaken both of their Honesty and their Understandings; if they are not, it remains now to Examine:

1. Who are the People that are Unease?
2. What the Pretences are for their being so?

1. Who are the People that are Unease? Negatively, first, Not the Government Her Majesty, and Her Wife Ministry, are not so Depriv'd of the Knowlege of the Nations True Interest, as not to see that fixing an Establishment upon the solid Basis of Truth and Liberty, must make all the Honest Men Ease; none can complain of the Currency of Justice, but those that want to break the Law with Impunity.

U u

Knaves

*Khaves rail at Laws, as Soldiers rail at Peace.*

The Government cannot but know that a just Ballance of Parties must preserve the Peace of England, as the Ballance of Power preserves the Peace of Europe.

The Government cannot be Uneasie at the Liberty Conceded to the People, because 'tis upon that very Foundation the present Constitution subsists; the same Law that Declares this Liberty, Declar'd this Succession; and 'tis very remarkable, that in the late Revolution, the Settlement of the Crown, and the Peoples Liberties went Hand in Hand, they were the two Wheels, the Great Machine of Government run upon, and the Law is the Axe-Tree; if either of these Wheels had been too big for one another, the Carriage would have gone awry, if either had been broke, it had been quite Overset.

'Tis again plain, the Government is Easie at it, in that we see the Queen and her Ministry are so Concern'd about it, so Earnest to keep it up upon the present Foot, and so Importunate with us all, to do nothing to Disturb or Destroy it.

On the other hand, It is Impossible the Government can be safe upon any other Foot, the sad Experience of the five last Reigns, has been a *Memento Mori* to the present; and I crave leave to look back upon them with Decency and Respect.

Ever since the coming of King James the First to the Crown, this Nation has been perplex'd with Divisions, Uneasinesses, Oppressions and Murmurings, both in Sovereign and Subject.

The Chief Moving Engine in all the Peoples Discontents, has been that Child of the Devil Persecution; either this has been a Church Handle, or a State Handle, to make the People Uneasie; and it has been made use of both ways, and indeed by both Sides; State Policy set the Church at work first, to Introduce Persecution, the Union of the People being thought Dangerous to the Government.

And here let me do Justice to the English Roman Catholicks, That they were not always willing to pull down a Church they Esteen'd Heretical; were not, to allow them

to be Catholicks, and I have nothing to do with that here, but this has been the Mask of Persecution all along, and when the Divisions of the Church have run to all rash Extremes, the Poor Papists were the Victims, then seeming Declarations, sham Speeches, and large Addresses frequently pass'd between Kings and Parliaments, to suppress Popery, to prevent the Growth of Popery, to Banish Popery and Papists from within ten Miles of the City, tho' they never troubled their Heads to stir in those Cases, nor indeed had they any Occasion, they knew the Jest too well.

The Busines was quite of another sort; the Courts found themselves under Occasion of Daily Encroachments upon the Peoples Liberties, and no way was found so Effectual to keep the Thoughts of the People busie, and agitated upon other Things, and so to turn them from being too Intent upon this Matter, like setting them in a Flame at one another, setting loose now one Party then another; to Day Persecution, to Morrow Illegal Liberty; to Day set the Church of England upon the Back of the Dissenter, to Morrow tempt the Dissenter with his Religious Liberty, at the Price of his Civil Liberty, Persecuting without Law, and Tollering against Law.

And I cannot pass this without remarking here a Speech made by that truly English Roman, Mr. Alderman Love, Member of Parliament for many Years, and Generally Chosen with the most Unanimous Consent of Voices that was ever known, for the City of London; a Speech which ought to be wrote in Letters of Gold, and remember'd, to the Honour of his Family, as long as Citizens and Parliaments remain.

King Charles the Second, had taken off the Persecution from the Dissenters, and given them a Liberty of Conscience, by a Proclamation.

The Dissenters, who had been horribly Plunder'd, and ill Treated, Greedily and Unwarily Embrac'd their Liberty, Rejoyc'd, Built Meeting-Houses, and Throng'd to them in Publick.

When the Parliament met, great Discourses, and warm Debates were made against the King's Dispensing with the Laws, and setting up his Proclamation in the room of, and

and in Opposition to an Act of Parliament, and Mr. Love Vigorously Opposed it, and pressed the Commons to Declare the Proclamation Arbitrary and Illegal. In this he was taken up very short, by one of the Court Party; which, if I remember right, was Sir Joseph Williamson, with these Words: *Why, Mr. Love, you are a Dissenter your self, it's very Ungrateful, that you that receive the Benefit, should object against the Manner.*

I ask Pardon of all that have a respect for Mr. Love's Memory, if I lessen the Spirit and Vigour of his Expression, in Default of an Exact Copy of his Words; but the Substance of his Reply, and as near as I remember, the Words were such as these.

*I am a Dissenter, and thereby Unhappily Obnoxious to the Law; and if you catch me in the Corn, you may put me into the Pound; the Law against the Dissenters, I should be glad to see Repeal'd by the same Authority that made it; but while it is a Law, the King cannot Repeal it by Proclamation; and I had much rather see the Dissenters suffer by the Rigour of the Law, tho' I suffer with them, than see all the Laws in England Tramp'd under the Foot of the Prerogative in this Example; and, I hope, the Dissenters understand their Liberty as English Men, better than to accept of it in an Illegal manner.*

Tho' this is a Digression, yet it lets us into the Matter, that the Persecution of the Dissenters has been all along an Effect of State Policy, more than Error of Zeal, or a mistake of Religion, and the Clamour against the Papists, was only made a Handle to Trick all Parties by, and to gull them into Fatal Mischiefs they did not foresee.

And 'tis for the Honour of the *Dissenters*, that they even Opposed their own Advantages of 'Inerty, rather than accept of them at the Expence of their Civil Rights.

Does this look, Gentlemen, like a People Enemies to the Laws, Peace, Constitution, and Government of *England*? People that had rather lose their Advantages, than accept them in an Arbitrary and Illegal manner? That had rather bear Persecution from their Brethren, than have Ease by a State Trick, that might be brought into a Precedent, to the Injury and Prejudice of their Country? Let the *C— of E—* show me such a Roman, such a Member, such a Re-

presentative in all the Time of their Establishment in *England*, I know of no Instance like it, but that of the old Earl of Strafford, who Entreated King *C— the First*, to take his Head off, in order to procure the Publick Peace; and we no where read that Prince found any Satisfaction in taking him at his Word.

Now looking back into these Times, when Persecution, whether for Special Malice, Reasons of State, or for whatsoever Politick Ends it was, had thus frequently Disturb'd this Nation, let us consider some Remarks on it.

1. Persecution never oppress'd the *Church*, but at the same time Invasion of Right crept into the Government; Church Tyranny and State Tyranny always went Hand in Hand.

2. Persecution being a State-Trick, Illegal and Arbitrary, always found its Death in restoring Right and Civil Property, Civil and Religious Liberty generally come together.

3. The Agents of Tyranny and Persecution, were, generally speaking, the same Individual Persons, Church Tyrants, and State Tyrants, acting from the same Principle.

The short Application of this Story, is to prove from hence, that the Government is not, as such, at all Uneasie at the *Dissenters*, for now there are no State Tyrannies on Foot, no Prerogative Encroachments, no Civil Invasion of Right, no Dispensing with Law, in our Government; the Occasion of Embroiling the People, to Cover those wicked Designs, is Ceas'd, and Persecution falls of Course.

'Tis plain the *Church of England*, has no persecuting Inclination of her self; and as the Government has no Inclination to Tyrannize, so they have no Occasion to Persecute.

No just Government in the World persecutes merely for Conscience, the very Principle is in its own Nature Antichristian and Unnatural; and it has very seldom been carried on any where from meer Zeal, but with a Complication of Private Ends, Intrigue, and all kinds of Abstracted Villany.

Our Government does not Persecute, because they dare not; the Queen acts from a Principle

Principle of Honour, Conscience, and Reason; and it's no Reproach, but a Glory to the Queen, to say Her Majesty dares not act contrary to those three Commanding Principles.

The present Court of England acts upon Principles of Justice, Law, and the Subjects Liberty; the Rules of Court are squat'd by the True and Just Laws of the Constitution, and the Queen will not, Her Ministers dare not, nor are any she Employes Visibly Inclined to break these just Measures.

Under such an Administration, the *Dissenters* have nothing to fear, when Justice had its due course, they were never persecuted; if the Common Law gave them up, Conscience, Equity, and Honour protected them.

The Government therefore is not Uneasie at the *Dissenters*, and the *Dissenters* Enjoying from the Government all the Freedom, Ease and Liberty they can demand, never could be Uneasie, and never was; and indeed how can they in their Wits be thought to Wish or Desire any ill to such a Government, under which they have all granted they can find in their Hearts to ask.

2. Therefore, Secondly, Neither are the *Dissenters* Uneasie.

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